

There are some key differences in how seasonal flu happens and how a pandemic flu happens.

SEASONAL FLU vs. PANDEMIC FLU

- Usually follows a predictable pattern, typically every year in the winter. There is usually some protection built up in a person from having the flu before.
 - Healthy adults are not usually at risk for any serious complications.
 - The medical community can usually meet public and patient needs.
 - Vaccines are developed before the flu season, based on known virus strains.
 - Supplies of antiviral drugs are usually available.
 - Average number of deaths in the US is about 36,000 a year
 - Regular flu symptoms: fever, cough, runny nose, and muscle pain.
 - A small impact on the community with sick people staying home from work and school.
 - Small impact on US and world economy.
- Does not happen often - only three times in the 20th century. The last time was in 1968. Since this new pandemic flu hasn't been seen before, there is no or little immunity.
 - Healthy people may be at risk for serious complications.
 - The medical community will be overwhelmed.
 - Vaccine developed early may not be effective. Once an effective vaccine is developed, it may not be available for several months.
 - May not have any effective antiviral drugs or the supply may be limited.
 - The number of deaths would be much higher, worldwide it could be millions.
 - Symptoms would be more serious and there would be more medical complications.
 - Big impact on the community. There could be travel restrictions, school closings, limited business hours or closings, and cancellations of public gatherings.